

Marines in Hayti Facing Another Philippines Task

View of Port au Prince, chief port of Hayti, made safe and under the American Administration. In circle is Major-Gen. George Barnett, under whose general command our marines pacified the turbulent southern republic.

Inquiry Into So-called Atrocities Shows Conditions of Guerilla Warfare Similar to Fighting Against the Moros

New York Herald Bureau, Washington, D. C., Jan. 15.

WE are on hard service, and the thanks we get is that the folks at home are made to think we are hard guys."

Thus wrote a homesick marine, sweltering in tropical Hayti, in a letter to his mother in New York. He had just read in a month old American newspaper an account of atrocities alleged to have been practised by himself and colleagues upon their "little brown brothers" in the turbulent southern republic.

In view of the exoneration by the Mayo Investigating Board of the conduct of the greater part of the American forces of occupation, there is perhaps some excuse for the "leatherneck's" bitterness. The court of inquiry, headed by Admiral Mayo, made an exhaustive investigation of the history of the American regime in Hayti, and found that, "with a few almost negligible exceptions," officers and men of the Marine Corps had conducted themselves with distinction and credit to the service.

Many Difficult Problems and Perils

For the Marines on Duty in Hayti

That the marines had much to contend with is indicated by the report of every officer who has been to Hayti. Scarcely a day has passed in the five years of American occupation that a marine has not been called upon to face some difficult problem, often alone and against great odds. Privates and non-commissioned officers found themselves promoted to positions of command in the native constabulary of *Gendarmes d'Hayti*, and in many instances were placed in situations where they were the only white men in the midst of hundreds of hostile "Cacos," the organized banditry which for years was a scourge to Hayti.

Under such circumstances it is not astonishing that now and again men proved themselves unequal to the position of authority, coupled with isolation, and a number of them went insane.

Conditions in Hayti were very similar to those which prevailed in the Philippines when the Americans first took them over. Bandit leaders, whose forces numbered from twenty men to two thousand, kept up a constant guerilla warfare. Their method was that of the head hunting Moro. They did not fight pitched battles, but were most at home in the brush, sniping and planning ambushes.

It has been estimated that 3,000 bandits have been killed in Hayti during the last five years, but Rear Admiral Harry S. Knapp, who spent several months in Hayti following sensational charges by Major-Gen. George Barnett that "practically indiscriminate killing of natives" had taken place, found that these killings occurred in legitimate warfare and that such warfare was necessary "to restore order and respect for human life." He also pointed out that in the same period American lives were sacrificed, and his description of the Cacos or "bad men" killed leads one to conclude that if more had been put out of the way the world would have been better off.

Admiral Knapp found that although "some bad cases of abuse of power on the part of the gendarmes" had occurred, there could be no doubt as to the generally high character of service rendered by American officers and men, and that American occupation has been of vast benefit to the Haytians themselves.

Lacking in Moral Fibre

For Republican Institutions

"From the day of the occupation," he reported, "there began an improvement in the material and moral conditions in Hayti that has steadily gone on until it can safely be said that never before have they been so good as they are at this moment."

His experiences, however, convinced him that the country is not ready, by reason of lack of education or even the most primary character, for any real republican institutions. Left to itself, it would fall a prey to men of some education, but of low ethics, who would exploit it for personal advantage.

The essential difficulty is apparently lack of anything like moral fibre and the ignorance and superstition of the greater part of the population, which is almost pure negro. There is a slight admixture of white blood, the result of the mixing of early French settlers with natives, or of more recent marriages and connections, but overwhelmingly the people are blacks, the descendants of slaves imported in the early days.

Voodooism is the prevailing religion. It is a species of snake worship, involving human sacrifice in its extreme rites. There have been numerous cases of cannibalism and blood drinking brought to the attention of American officials, and one Voodoo priest was tried and convicted by military court of this offence. He was accused of having at one time or another killed thirteen children, whose blood was drunk and whose flesh was eaten by members of his congregation.

Charges Native Bandit Chiefs Taught

Followers to Mutilate White Victims

There is also evidence in the official records of the Marine Corps that the native bandit chiefs taught their followers to mutilate their white victims as a charm against



By HARRIS & ZIMMER

death. If a native Haytian ate the heart of a marine he would have the courage of a marine; if he ate the liver he would have the wisdom of the white man, the liver being considered by Haytians as the seat of wisdom; if the brain of a marine were rubbed on the sights of a Haytian's rifle he would have unerring aim and would kill many marines.

In April of 1920 a small patrol of marines and gendarmes under Lieut. Lawrence Muth, who though a lieutenant in the native constabulary was only a sergeant in the Marine Corps, was ambushed near Morne Michel by a much larger force of Cacos. Muth was shot early in the fighting, though he continued to direct his men and gave them advice as to the best means of escaping. Private Stone, the second in command, was also wounded. The two remaining marines used their auto-rifle with good effect but were forced to retreat.

A relief party found the headless body of Muth with the heart cut out. A prisoner testified that he had seen Benoit Batraville, a notorious bandit leader, sever the head from Muth's body, take out the brain and cause his men to rub their rifles with it, in order "to make them hit all the marines they fired at." When Benoit was killed later in the month he was carrying Muth's rifle and Colt automatic.

Most Notorious of the Bandits Killed

In a Thrilling Exploit by Marines

The most notorious bandit of all those who gave trouble to the marines was Charlemagne Peralte, who, with a large following, for years kept the northern part of the island in fear and subservience. He was killed by Capt. Herman H. Hanneken, a sergeant in the Marine Corps, who with Corporal William R. Button and twenty gendarmes penetrated the rebel lines and killed Charlemagne in his headquarters, surrounded by a rebel army of 1,200. Peralte's personal guard at the time was not less than 250 men.

Having blackened their faces and donned old civilian clothes, Hanneken, Button and twenty gendarmes worked their way through six lines of outposts while the army of Peralte was besieging the town of Grande Riviere, and, having come to Peralte's headquarters, opened fire upon the guard with an auto-rifle, killing Charlemagne and nine other bandits. They then escaped in the darkness.

For this exploit Hanneken and Button received the medal of honor.

Another typical example of the treachery of the Cacos is contained in the official account of the death of Private Clarence E. Morris, a marine aviator, killed November 4, 1919. Morris left his disabled plane, taking with him the Lewis gun and three drums of ammunition. He got three natives to guide him, and later gave the machine gun to one of the natives to carry. Becoming tired, he sat down, and while in that position was struck from behind with a machete.

The natives then took the machine gun, his clothes and ammunition and joined the bandits. Searching parties found nothing but the bones of the aviator and a leather helmet.

The official reports to the Navy Department abound in such stories of killing from ambush or treachery on the part of presumably friendly natives.

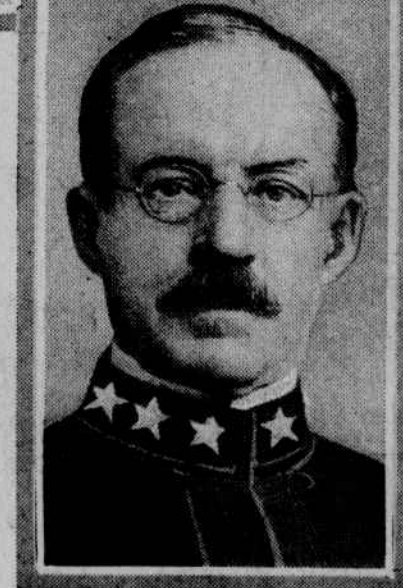
Bandits the Controlling Element

In Revolutionary Movements

The area of Hayti is approximately 10,000 square miles. The country is very mountainous. Between the great mountain ranges lie densely populated river valleys of extraordinary fertility. Hayti is therefore exceptionally well adapted for the activities of bandit bands. Throughout the history of Hayti, banditry has been prevalent, the bands being recruited from released or escaped criminals and from the class of men who prefer to live by robbing the industrious, peaceful people in the valleys rather than by earning their bread by their own labor.

Banditry has been one of the greatest evils which the Haytian people have had to contend with, not only because of the actual injury done by the depredations of the bandits, but also for the reason that the bandit bands have formed the nuclei of the so-called revolutionary armies which have so frequently devastated Hayti and drenched its soil with blood.

Always the Cacos have been the controlling element in revolutions. They were purchased by first one candidate and then another. Finishing a contract with one man, they having put him in power, would im-



REAR ADMIRAL H. S. KNAPP.
His findings in regard to the Marine Corps administration of Hayti showed the task faced.

mediately sell their services to the next aspirant to unseat the first.

Since the independence of Hayti, January 1, 1804, there have been two emperors, one king and twenty-four presidents. Of these five died in office from natural causes, four were assassinated or killed in action against revolutionists, one committed suicide, two resigned, one served a full term alive and one is now in office. The rest left under revolutionary auspices, generally fleeing the country.

Dessalines was made "Governor for life of the Haytian State" upon the declaration of independence, but proclaimed himself Emperor eight months later, and was ambushed and killed in October of the next year. This began the revolutionary habit of Hayti under independence, with the result that only one President has served his full term and retired peacefully.

President Le Conte was assassinated with about two hundred of his guards by the criminal blowing up of the National Palace on August 8, 1912. His successor died the following May of an illness whose origin was not above suspicion. The next President went into exile after less than two years. His successor lasted eight months, and the next President about two months more. Then came President Guillaume Sam, who is believed to have caused more than one hundred and fifty political prisoners to be massacred in prison, and who was himself killed July 28, 1915, in the French Legation, where he had sought asylum after being wounded in the Presidential mansion.

Body of Slain President Dragged

Through Streets of Port au Prince

His body was mutilated and dragged about the streets of Port au Prince in an indescribably brutal manner, as is shown by official photographs now in the archives of the Marine Corps at Washington. President Dardiguenave, the present incumbent, was elected August 12, 1915, and has been kept in office only through the support of the American forces.

When it became evident that the Haytians were beyond the power to better conditions for themselves and when several European powers had indicated that they would take over the government of the island if the United States did not, the American Government sent warships to Port au Prince, July 26, 1915, and after a more than patient delay



TYPICAL U. S. MARINE.

Rear Admiral Caperton on September 3, 1915, declared martial law and reestablished order in Port au Prince and other principal cities.

The marines were reinforced, and ever since there has been a force there which has varied from 1,000 to 2,000. Customs houses were taken over by American officers, the funds being used to organize an efficient constabulary, for temporary public works to afford relief to discharged soldiers and a starving population and finally for the support of the Government.

On August 12, 1915, Dardiguenave was elected President of the Republic, by Congress, the vote being: Dardiguenave 94; Cauvin 14; Thezan 4; Bobo 3. Dardiguenave, after taking the oath of office, made a speech in which he promised to govern solely for the benefit of Hayti, and expressed appreciation of the American forces, which he stated had made possible an election free from intimidation.

As a matter of fact, the Congress which elected Dardiguenave was not representative of the people and had not been elected by them, there having been no such thing as a fair election in Hayti for years. Dardiguenave, however, was not the leader of any faction, and for that reason and because he had shown a disposition to cooperate with the American military government to estab-



ADMIRAL HENRY T. MAYO.
An investigating board under him exonerated the Marine Corps of atrocity charges.

lish order was most acceptable to the State Department.

Shortly after his election Dardiguenave's government was recognized by the United States, the treaty having been signed on September 17, 1915.

"Competent observers on the spot," said Admiral Knapp, "do not hesitate to say that to the American occupation Dardiguenave owes the fact that he is alive in office instead of being dead or a refugee. If the American forces were withdrawn it is not believed that his administration would last a fortnight, for the rewards of revolution would be greater now than before owing to the prosperity brought about by the good order and stability that have resulted from the occupation. Even with the occupation there have been incipient revolutions, one of some magnitude."

The treaty with Hayti which was ratified May 3, 1916, provides for the customs receivership, a financial adviser and for American engineers to direct sanitation and public improvements and for a native constabulary to be organized and officered by Americans. All these American officials are appointed by the President of Hayti upon nomination by the President of the United States.

The treaty was not put into full effect until nearly a year after its ratification, but meantime the forces of occupation continued their work. They reestablished order at first in the coast cities and then in the back country. Naval officers of the pay corps collected customs duties. The Gendarmes d'Hayti was organized and officered from the Marine Corps, junior officers being selected from the enlisted personnel.

The Gendarmes d'Hayti is a force of 2,500 Haytians. It is the sole police and military force authorized by Haytian laws. It polices towns and country districts and is in charge of all prisons and jails. There is not a single case of disloyalty against their officers or against the record of the gendarmes. Marine Corps officers say.

The receivership general was a going concern when the treaty went into effect. The receiver general has a number of American assistants, but the greater number of employees are Haytians, some in responsible positions. Customs due are honestly collected and turned over to the national Treasury. By the treaty 5 per cent. of collections are allowed for expenses of receivership.

Engineers Acting Under the Treaty

Are Developing Natural Resources

Despite the falling off in business incident to the war customs receipts in 1919-1920 were \$6,421,000, as compared with \$4,024,485 in 1910-1911, a prosperous year, and \$3,311,548 in 1914-1915. Indications are that receipts will break all records for the year 1920-1921.

Though the engineers authorized by the treaty to take charge of development of natural resources, sanitation, etc., did not arrive in Hayti until January, 1917, and were badly handicapped when they did arrive by lack of facilities, considerable progress has been made.

Plans for new irrigation projects have

Order Established, Natural Resources Developed and Black Republic Makes Strides Toward Civilization

been worked out and 2,500 miles of irrigation ditches have been repaired, studies for harbor improvements have been made, the business section of Port au Prince has been paved, the water works of Port au Prince and Aux Cayes have been greatly improved, telephone and telegraph lines have been extended and repaired, the country has been divided into sanitary districts under a competent official and free clinics established, hospitals have been improved, proper quarantine and inspection established, mosquito breeding swamps in the vicinity of cities have been drained, and in general a campaign has been carried on to teach the people more sanitary habits.

One of the features of American occupation which has been most often condemned by critics of the American regime in Hayti is the so-called "corvee" or system of forced labor on the roads. Good roads being almost unheard of in Hayti, one of the first tasks undertaken by the gendarmes was the building of 250 miles of road for wheel traffic from Port au Prince to Cape Haitien and northeast to Ouanaminthe.

The laws of Hayti provided for the maintenance and repair of highways "by the inhabitants, in rotation, in each section through which these roads pass and each time repairs are necessary." The gendarmes pressed the inhabitants into service, and as time went on people from other sections than that through which the road passed were forced to work upon them. The opposition to the "corvee" system eventually became so great that it was discontinued, though the law authorizing it was not repealed.

Corvee System in Force Long

Before the American Occupation

Speaking of this system, Admiral Knapp in his report to Secretary Daniels said: "The corvee system was employed during the American occupation for building roads. The sole object of these roads was not military, although they undoubtedly had great military value. The corvee system was no new thing brought about by the American occupation. The corvee law stands on the Haytian statute books, where it has been since January 1, 1865. Similar laws exist or have existed in States of our own country. I personally believe the law to be a good one if legally administered."

"Criticism has been made of acts of individuals, going to the extent of saying that murders and tortures have been committed. There have been cases of abuse of power on the part of some junior officers of the gendarmes and of the enlisted men. It has been the policy to punish offenders, and when such cases were known to the senior officers it is my belief that the offenders have been punished. A few cases may exist where the offences did not become known until after the offenders had passed beyond reach."

"Criticism has been heard of harsh measures that were taken to retain laborers from one section and force them to work in others. I am not yet in position either to affirm or deny these accusations. If the fact be admitted that laborers were forced against their will and under military domination to work in sections of which they were not inhabitants, it is strongly probable that they tried to escape from what was virtual peonage and that the subordinate officers and men of the gendarmes in charge of them very probably were guilty at times of harsh measures to retain them."

Admiral Knapp found that less than one per cent. of the total population of Hayti is engaged in agitation against the United States, and that a majority are extremely grateful to the Americans for restoring order. He believes it probable that 90 per cent. of the people are quite indifferent as to the form of their government so long as it assures domestic tranquillity and the possibility of enjoying the fruits of their labors. The population as a whole is dense, ignorant, the percentage of illiteracy being estimated as high as 97, and in addition the mentality is of a very low type. With such a population, a fair election, in the American sense, is an impossibility. The mass of the people know nothing about the matters on which they are voting or about the principles on which their votes are cast.

Voice of the Machine

NOT so long ago a machinery company in Boston had an interesting experience in truly modern methods of conducting the technical part of its business. It had sold a large and expensive machine to a factory in Canada. At the time it was shipped the company sent a skilled machinist to see that it was properly set up and put in good running order. The machine reached its destination in safety, but the workman was taken with a serious illness and was obliged to return.

The superintendent of the factory, knowing that if the machine could be made to run at once it would save hundreds of dollars in the factory expenses, endeavored to put the machine up without aid. He succeeded in erecting it so that it looked all right, but something was wrong; it did not run smoothly and gave out a curious, rasping noise.

The manufacturers decided to consult the Boston machinery company over the telephone, called them up and told them that the machine refused to run smoothly and that it was making a curious noise.

"Extend your wires into the room where the machine is running. Our expert is here, and we'll have him listen to it," was the reply.

This was done. The skilled machinist of the Boston company directed in what positions the receiver of the telephone should be placed. Suddenly his ear caught the sound which came from the seat of the trouble. In a few seconds he had told the Canadian company the mistake that had been made in assembling the machine, and in a few minutes more the change had been made which caused everything to run smoothly.

A Bird's Barbed Wire Fence

IN Central America are many strange birds with stranger habits, but probably none is more interesting than a little brown wren which may be seen along the roadsides or on fences. This little bird, about the size of a canary, builds a nest out of all proportion to its apparent needs. It selects a small tree with horizontal branches growing close together. Across two of the branches he lays sticks fastened together with tough fibre until a platform about six feet long by two feet wide is constructed.

On the end of this platform nearest the tree trunk he then builds a huge dome shaped nest a foot or so high, with thick sides of interwoven thorns. A covered passageway is then made from the nest to the end of the platform in as crooked a manner as possible. Across the outer end as well as at short intervals along the inside of this tunnel are placed cunning little fences of thorns, with just enough space for the owners to pass through. On going out this opening is closed by the owner by placing thorns across the gateway, and thus the safety of eggs or young is assured.